



State of Utah

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Don't Use Water from Utah Lake, Jordan River, or Related Canals**

*Harmful cyanobacteria are currently present in the water and can cause severe illnesses*

SALT LAKE CITY – Elevated levels of harmful algae in Jordan River and lower Little Cottonwood Creek have prompted state and local agencies to post warning signs and limit access to the Jordan River system. Utah Lake remains closed.

Algal blooms can last for days or weeks and toxins can last for days after the bloom. Response agencies don't expect to have a forecast on when the water can be used for any purpose for at least a week.

This warning does not affect drinking water, since it comes from a separate source.

Residents who receive secondary water from the Jordan River should not use it. Secondary water is commonly used for watering lawns and gardens.

Salt Lake County Health Department is posting warning signs at all major recreational access points to the Jordan River within Salt Lake County; the Jordan River and all canals in the county are potentially unsafe for people and animals. The river is not closed at this time.

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) strongly advises farmers and ranchers against using water from Utah Lake for food production, especially fruits and vegetables, and livestock watering until lab results are available early next week. If farmers and ranchers have access to other sources UDAF advises them to use those alternative sources to water crops, livestock other animals.

Pet owners are also advised to keep animals away from the lake, river and canals and should not let them drink the water. Pets that have been exposed to affected waters and are exhibiting symptoms should be seen by a veterinarian. Symptoms in pets include weakness, fatigue and excessive saliva production.

Anglers are also currently advised not to fish, or consume fish from Utah Lake and sections of the Jordan River that feed in and out of the lake. Anyone who has caught fish from those areas in, or after July 10, is advised to not consume their catch.

North Jordan Irrigation Company has been shutting down weirs to slow irrigation flow to their

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customers.

Sampling in Utah Lake on July 13 led to the discovery of the harmful cyanobacteria. The toxins that can be produced by the species can cause liver damage and/or neurological damage. Toxin data will be available on Tuesday or Wednesday. Exposure to the algae can cause vomiting, headaches, and skin rashes. Contact your physician or the Utah Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) if you believe you may be experiencing symptoms from exposure to a harmful algal bloom.

For updates on lake and river conditions in Utah County, go to [alerts.utahcounty.gov](https://alerts.utahcounty.gov) and sign up for an account. After signing up, select the method of contact, create a profile, and select a location. Then choose the alert subscription for “Utah Lake” under “Utah County Alerts.”

Agencies involved include various State agency departments, including the departments of Agriculture and Food, Environmental Quality, Health, Natural Resources, Public Safety and various divisions within those departments. At the local level, responding agencies include the Utah County, Salt Lake County health departments, irrigation companies and water districts, as well as the municipalities in the affected counties.

For updates, visit: <http://deq.utah.gov/locations/U/utahlake/algal-bloom.htm>

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#### About DEQ

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality’s (DEQ) mission is to safeguard public health and quality of life by protecting and enhancing the environment. DEQ implements state and federal environmental laws and works with individuals, community groups and businesses to protect the quality of Utah’s air, land and water. For more information, visit [www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov), follow DEQ on Facebook ([utahdeq](https://www.facebook.com/utahdeq)) and Twitter ([UtahDEQ](https://twitter.com/UtahDEQ)), or call 1-800-458-0145.

